

# #4: We Eat Fruits and Vegetables



## HEALTHY CONVERSATION STARTERS

What is your favorite red fruit?

How many vegetables can you name that are dark green?

If you were planting a garden, what fruits and vegetables would you plant and why?

### Think Together

- Talk about the fruits and vegetables your family likes and **new ones that they would like to try.**
- Set a goal to **try one new fruit or vegetable every week.**
- Think about a rainbow when it comes to fruits and vegetables. Be sure to **include red, orange and dark-green vegetables.**

### Eat Together

- Enjoy **family meals** together as often as possible.
- Encourage your child to eat more fruits and vegetables by **cooking together.**
- **Fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables.**
- Offer a fruit or vegetable with every meal and for every snack—**keep fruits and vegetables in easy-to-reach places.**
- Don't give up when introducing new fruits and vegetables! **It can take up to 15 different tries** for a child to like a new food.

### Move Together

- Children need **60 minutes of physical activity every day—make family time active time.**
- **Grocery shopping** is another way to get moving together. By both planning and shopping together, you can involve your child in choosing fruits and vegetables.
- **Grow a vegetable garden.** Bending, twisting, digging and weeding the garden are great ways for your family to be active together. No room? No problem! Look for a community garden where you live.
- **Visit a U-Pick farm or orchard** for a fun way to move together as a family and come home with fresh produce. Visit [localharvest.com](http://localharvest.com) to find one nearby.

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Take **Healthy Steps** for **Healthy Lives** Together

## Tips for Encouraging Fruits and Vegetables

- Prepare fruits and vegetables in a variety of ways; try them raw, cooked, cut up and whole. Let your child choose which ways they like best.
- Don't let children fill up on snacks before meals; it is easier to get children to try new foods when they are hungry.
- Stay positive! If you feel like you have a "picky eater" on your hands, try to avoid labeling him or her as such. Children often grow into the labels we give them.
- Don't forget to be a role model by trying new foods yourself.

## Five-Food-Group Lunches

- Bean, low-fat cheese and whole-grain tortilla roll-up; tomato salsa; pineapple chunks and water
- Sliced cucumber, low-fat cheese and pita bread sandwich; sliced hard-boiled egg; grapes and water
- Black-bean soup; whole-grain crackers; low-fat cheddar cheese cubes; celery sticks; apple and water
- Grilled chicken-breast slices, spinach and strawberry salad; whole-grain roll and low-fat milk
- Whole-grain English muffin pizza (low-fat shredded cheese, tomato sauce, chopped broccoli and green pepper); blueberries; mixed nuts and water

## Schools and Families Can Get Healthier Together

- Work together with the school and other parents and caregivers to plant a vegetable garden and fruit trees on school grounds. For how-to tips visit [letsmove.gov/gardening-guide](http://letsmove.gov/gardening-guide).

## Read Together

- **James and the Giant Peach** by Roald Dahl (fiction)
- **Vegetables (Food Groups)** by Lola M. Schaefer (non-fiction)



**TRIVIA ANSWER:** Children in grades K-6 who get less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day need to eat approximately 1½ cups of fruit and 1½ - 2½ cups of vegetables every day. A handful of baby carrots or one medium-size apple each count as about ½ cup.

The exact amount of fruits and vegetables we should eat every day depends on our age, gender and how active we are. Visit [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov) to find the right amount for your family.

